

COMMISSION CONNECTION

Summer/Fall 2002

Newsletter of the Kentucky Commission on Women
Strengthening Kentucky by Strengthening Kentucky's Women

Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women reaches critical point

The Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women has begun to wrap up the first steps in its work to improve the lives of Kentucky women, as they prepare their recommendations for a plan of action. As the *Commission Connection* goes to press, the five Issue Committees of the Task Force are preparing their final reports for presentation to the Task Force in late September.

The purpose of the Task Force, chaired by First Lady Judi Patton and former Governor Martha Layne Collins, is to examine the issues that are obstacles to the economic progress of Kentucky women, identify solutions, and develop a plan of action. The many Kentuckians involved in this important project have worked hard over the last 10 months, since Governor Paul Patton appointed the Task Force in November of 2001.

Key to the success of the Task Force are five Issue Committees reporting to the Task Force. These committees have met monthly in Frankfort since December of 2001, performing an incredible amount of work in a limited time frame. Over 450 women and men volunteered to serve on the committees and well over half that number have remained dedicated to attending monthly meetings and carrying out a great deal of work between each meeting. Individuals from as far away as Owensboro and Pikeville have taken the monthly drive in order to make a difference.

After the first round of committee meetings, each Issue Committee—Committees on Economic Development and Employment, Education and Leadership, Social and Cultural Barriers, State Government Employees, and Women in Positions of Power—divided into subcommittees in order to concentrate on specific challenges facing Kentucky women.

Committee members spent January through April gathering and analyzing available research and data specific to their topics. In May they began investigating existing resources and model practices and started writing their reports this summer.

Throughout the process, the Issue Committees have received input from Task Force members about existing resources and sources of data. Once the final committee reports have been presented in September, the Task Force will determine the final findings and recommendations based on these reports.



Members of the Social and Cultural Barriers issue committee share ideas and research at their meeting in May.

Governor Patton, the Task Force, and the Kentucky Commission on Women will hold a press conference in late November 2002 to announce the summary findings and recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women. The full report will not be released until June 20-21, 2003 at the first **Governor's Summit on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women** at the Farnham-Dudgeon Civic Center in Frankfort.

The Summit will be a time to not only celebrate the work of so many dedicated Kentuckians, but a time to strategize about the steps needed to put the plan of action of the Task Force into motion. The Kentucky Commission on Women intends for this Summit to become a biennial event, so that we can reconvene every two years to measure the changes that we affect and the next steps that we need to take.

Mark your calendar for the Governor's Summit on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women, visit the KCW website at <http://women.state.ky.us> for information and updates, join the KentuckyWomen list, and keep reading the *Commission Connection* in order to **stay informed!**

Northern Kentucky Citizens Win Latest Fight for Birth Control Access

By Annie Dollins, OPEHN member

A Northern Kentucky grassroots group combined with KCW to derail a plan to deny Northern Kentucky women access to health care funded by Title X. Organizing to Protect Essential Health Needs (OPEHN) was established in February of 2001 in response to Northern Kentucky Independent Health District (NKIHD) Board initiatives targeting access to reproductive health care information and services.

Many interpreted the board's initiatives as an attempt to establish a local theocracy. (A theocracy is a political unit dominated by officials who believe it is their prerogative to govern according to the tenets of their specific religion.)

In the spring of 2002, Addia Wuchner, R.N., Board Member Designee for Boone County Judge Executive Gary Moore, proposed the elimination of reproductive health care services to women eligible for Title X support. Title X is federal funding, begun in the Nixon administration, and is available to health departments or other health care entities which covers a variety of women's health issues. If the measure passed, women would no longer be assured that cancer or breast screenings, traditional birth control methods, reproductive health information, or sexually transmitted infection diagnosis and treatment would be offered within the NKIHD.

OPEHN responded to NKIHD's efforts to discontinue health care services by focusing its efforts on identifying support against the measure. OPEHN encouraged the public's attendance at the NKIHD Board's May Caucus and Public Hearing, obtained national and local speakers for the hearing, aligned with groups like KCW, and lobbied board members. When the proposal came up for a vote at the NKIHD Board meeting on June 19, Board Chairman Greg Kennedy of Grant County broke a tie and caused the measure to fail by one vote.

OPEHN recognizes it cannot sit back and wait for the next initiative from the board.

This issue will surface again. OPEHN is seeking to build increased support for its effort to hold accountable those individuals and groups who would negatively affect the health and well being of Northern Kentucky residents. Individuals or groups interested in joining OPEHN or assisting it in its work are encouraged to contact Annie Dollins at 859/572-5243 or by email at dollinsa@nku.edu.

First Lady Judi Patton Named Chair of NGA Spouses Leadership Committee

Kentucky First Lady Judi Patton, KCW Board member and Co-Chair of the Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women, became chair of the National Governor's Association (NGA) Spouses Leadership Committee on July 16, 2002. At the same meeting, Governor Paul E. Patton was elected chairman of the NGA for 2002-2003.

Mrs. Patton will head the group, comprised of the spouses of the nation's 50 states and five territories.



First Lady Judi Patton

"The spouses of the governors of the states and territories have united over many years to tackle some tough issues and do some powerful things for the citizens of our states. It is my honor to chair this group and continue to make a positive difference for our citizens," Mrs. Patton said.

Joining Mrs. Patton on the Spouses Leadership Committee (SLC) will be vice chair Patricia Kempthorne of Idaho, Judy O'Bannon of Indiana, Hope Taft of Ohio, Marie Barnes of Georgia, and Stephanie Johanns of Nebraska.

Mrs. Patton's responsibilities include establishing a national initiative for the spouses and serving as advisor to the potential 38 new spouses who may join the organization after the November 2002 election (38 governorships are on the ballot in November).

"However different the state and territories are, there are many similarities that go into the roles of being the spouses of the Governors and the first lady of the states. In the beginning everyone looks for answers and direction. It will be the job of SLC to provide whatever is needed," Mrs. Patton explained.

Mrs. Patton succeeded Michelle Engler, wife of Governor John Engler and first lady of Michigan. For more information and for updates throughout Mrs. Patton's tenure, please visit <http://gov.state.ky.us/firstlady/index.htm> or www.nga.org.

KCW seeking *Kentucky Women Remembered* nominations for 2003

- KCW is seeking *Kentucky Women Remembered* nominations of outstanding women from around the state to be honored for their accomplishments and achievements.
- KCW created the original *Kentucky Women Remembered* Exhibit in 1978. Composed of watercolor portraits of outstanding women in Kentucky's history, past and present. The Exhibit found a permanent home in the West Wing of the Capitol in 1996 due to efforts of the Commission on Women and First Lady Judi Patton. Now, thousands of visitors to our state Capitol view the portraits each year and learn about the heritage and contributions of the women of Kentucky.
- Nominees must have been born in or spent a significant part of their lives in Kentucky and may be living or deceased. This Exhibit honors outstanding Kentucky women and their lifetime achievements, therefore nominees should have reached the pinnacle of their careers or other chosen pursuits.
- Past honorees include former state senator Georgia Powers, Olympic swimmer Mary T. Meagher Plant, and Frontier Nursing Service founder Mary Breckinridge.
- To get a copy of the nomination form or to learn more about the program, please visit the KCW web site at <http://women.state.ky.us>.

KCW Welcomes New Board Members

In February of 2002, three women joined the ranks of KCW Board members. Regina Middleton of Paducah, Kathy Riley of Lexington, and Carolyn Whitaker-Tandy were appointed by Governor Paul E. Patton to replace three outgoing Board members.



Board members (l-r) Regina Middleton, Sara Sidebottom, Betsy Brinson, Donna Peden, Mary Edna Blackmon, Judith Gambill, and Kathy Riley participate in the KCW Board meeting on April 24, 2002 at the Salato Wildlife Center.

Regina Middleton—When appointed to the KCW Board, Regina was a resident of Paducah. She and her family have since moved to Richmond after her husband was named an assistant coach to the Eastern Kentucky University men's basketball team. A native of New York state, Regina has been a resident of Kentucky since 1995 and has worked at the Paducah Chamber of Commerce, West Kentucky TECH, and most recently as a counselor at Paducah Community College. She also worked for several years in a variety of capacities for Southern Illinois University. Regina is a member of the McCracken County Juvenile Delinquency Council, Paducah Head Start Policy Council, and the Governor's Minority Employment, Business Affairs, and Economic Development Council. She received the Young Careerist Award from the Kentucky Southwest Regional chapter of Business and Professional Women in 1997.

Kathy Riley—Kathy is very familiar with the work of KCW because she served as a Commission intern in 1994. She attended the University of Kentucky and graduated from Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in public relations. She is a member of the Lexington Commission on Race Relations, Professional Women's Forum, and the Kentucky Migrant Network Coalition. Kathy is a native of Owensboro and currently holds the position of community relations coordinator for the Fayette-Urban County Human Rights Commission.

Carolyn Whitaker-Tandy—Carolyn arrived in Kentucky in 2001 with a wealth of experience from Washington, DC. A resident of Louisville, Carolyn currently serves as a program manager for Honeywell DMC Services. She graduated from Gordon College in Massachusetts and moved to Washington where she held a variety of positions including Director of College Democrats of America and Director of African-American Outreach at the Democratic National Committee. Before moving to Kentucky, Carolyn was employed by the US Department of Energy. She is a member of the NAACP and National Council of Negro Women. Carolyn is a trained and sought-after public speaker and trainer. *Carolyn is not pictured in the above photograph.*

These three women replace longstanding KCW Board members Judi Jennings, director of the Kentucky Foundation for Women in Louisville; Daisy Bryant James of Owensboro; and Lela Williams of Elizabethtown. KCW thanks these outstanding women for their years of service.

Organization Provides Opportunities to Women in State Government

By Margaret Harney, NWSG member

An organization open to all women employed by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and other interested persons, Network of Women in State Government, Inc., is providing professional growth and networking opportunities for its members.

In addition to monthly meetings, which usually include an informative speaker, Network plans to offer a variety of professional development seminars and workshops during its 2002-2003 year. Members and guests will also have an opportunity to relax and network at planned social events, including a membership tea.

The tea is sponsored by Network and its past presidents. It will be held on Sept. 25, 11 a.m. - 1p.m., at the Woman's Club Building, 200 Washington St. in Frankfort.

The group currently meets only in Frankfort — regular meetings are at noon on the last Wednesday of each month — but is working toward establishing chapters throughout the state.

Network began its 2002-2003 year effective July 1 with a new slate of officers. They are:

President--Margaret Daniel
President Elect--Ruth Schiller
V. P. - Public Relations--Margaret Harney
Secretary--Linda Howard
Treasurer--Robinil Jameson

For more information on the Network of Women in State Government, contact President Margaret Daniel at 502/564-7430 ext. 2218, or via e-mail at margaret.daniel@mail.state.ky.us.

For information on the membership tea, contact the event's chairperson, Carolyn Osborne, at (502) 564-2285, ext. 4443, or via e-mail at cosborne@mail.state.ky.us.

Kentuckywomen List, the KCW-moderated listserv, has grown to over 500 individual and organization subscribers. Please do not miss out on this great way to stay informed of events and issues around the state and nation. To subscribe, send an email request to: lyris@listserv.state.ky.us with "subscribe kentuckywomen" (without the quotation marks) in the body of the message. Please delete any automatic signature that appears in your outgoing messages.

UPCOMING EVENTS (SEPTEMBER THROUGH DECEMBER)

September

September is National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month--please visit Ovarian Awareness of Kentucky at www.ovarian.homestead.com for more information.

- 4 **"Battle Scars," Professional Women's Forum**, Lafayette Club (15th floor Bank One Building), 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Lexington. Guest speakers are Bonnie Quantrell Jones, Priest at St. Peter's in Paris and owner of Quantrell Cadillacs; Sylvia Lovely, Executive Director of Kentucky League of Cities; and Gretchen Brown, Executive Director of Hospice of the Bluegrass. Reservations are required. Request reservations at prowomensforum@aol.com or 859/233-1171.
- 9-10 **Women's Health in Kentucky 5th Annual Conference**, 12 noon-5:00 p.m. on Sept. 9 (reception at 7) and 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on Sept. 10. Holiday Inn North, Lexington. Registration fee is \$50 for both days, \$25 for one day. Reservations required. Visit <http://CEprofessor.uky.edu> or call 859/257-5320 ext. 275 for more information or to register, or view the conference registration brochure at <http://women.state.ky.us>. Co-sponsored by the Kentucky Commission on Women.
- 10 **"Emergency Contraception and Adolescents—A Workshop for Health Educators and Providers,"** 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., site TBA, Bowling Green. Presented by the Kentucky Coalition on Teenage Pregnancy and Advocates for Youth. Pre-registration required by contacting Betsy Neale at 859/277-6101 or bneale@uky.edu.
- 12 **"Emergency Contraception and Adolescents—A Workshop for Health Educators and Providers,"** 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Ramada Inn, Lexington. Presented by the Kentucky Coalition on Teenage Pregnancy and Advocates for Youth. Pre-registration required; contacted Betsy Neale at 859/277-6101 or bneale@uky.edu.
- 13 **Music and Moonlight at Milford Court Manor**, Richmond, 5:30-10:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Richmond Area Arts Council. Cost is \$35 and includes entertainment, food, silent auction, and artists' booths. Call 859/624-4242 or visit www.artsinrichmond.com for more information.
- 14 **Race for the Cure**, 8:00 a.m., Lexington. Pre-registration available at the New Balance Store (Woodhill Plaza on New Circle Road) from Sept. 11-13, 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Please contact Barb Thompson at 859/233-4511 ext. 4232 or barb@ure.net for more information.
- 17 **Derby City Chapter of Federally Employed Women, Inc.**, Holiday Inn Downtown, Bienville Room, 5:15 p.m., Louisville. Contact Mary Lou Andres for more information at 502/569-3884 or marylouandres@msn.com.
- 19 **Leading Change—3rd Annual Women's Business & Leadership Conference**, 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Radisson Hotel, Lexington. Registration fee is \$150. For more information on the conference and for registration, please visit www.womenleadingky.com or email womenleadingky@kentucky.com.
- 19 **Kentucky Coalition on Teenage Pregnancy**, Galt House, Louisville. Program to be finalized at a later date. Pre-registration required by contacting Betsy Neale at 859/277-6101 or bneale@uky.edu.
- 25 **Network of Women in State Government Membership Tea**, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Woman's Club Building, 200 Washington Street, Frankfort. Open to members, prospective members, and interested parties. For more information on the event please contact Carolyn Osborne at 502/564-2285 ext. 4443 or cosborne@mail.state.ky.us.
- 26 **Metropolitan Louisville Women's Political Caucus**, Masterson's Restaurant, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., Louisville. FREE. Guest speaker is Beverly Watts, Executive Director, KY Commission on Human Rights, "Human Rights: What Does it Mean to You." Reservations for hors d'oeuvres and drinks (\$15.00) are requested by calling 968-3194.

October

- 2 **Professional Women's Forum**, Lafayette Club (15th floor Bank One Building), 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m., Lexington. Networking meeting of the Professional Women's Forum. Reservations are required. Request reservations at by emailing prowomensforum@aol.com or calling 859/233-1171.
- 10 **Derby City Chapter of Federally Employed Women, Inc.**, Shoney's Restaurant (Fern Valley Road), 5:30 p.m., Louisville. Contact Mary Lou Andres for more information at 502/569-3884 or marylouandres@msn.com.
- 21 **"Women in Management"** seminar, Frankfort Business and Professional Women, 12 noon, State Office Building, Frankfort. Cost is \$10 (includes lunch). RSVP by October 18 to Susan Smith at 502/695-5886 or susan.smith@mail.state.ky.us.
- 28 **Gynecological Cancers: What to Know and How to Prevent It** sponsored by Ovarian Awareness of Kentucky, 7:00-8:00 p.m., St. Mathews/Eline Public Library (Grandview Avenue at Breckenridge Lane), Louisville. Dr. William Helm, University of Louisville Healthcare gynecologic oncologist, will be the guest speaker. Free to the public. Reservations required and space is limited; please call 502/721-8311 or email ovarianawareness@yahoo.com to register.

November

- TBD KCW will release summary findings from the Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women. Date and location will be posted on the KCW website at <http://women.state.ky.us> as soon as possible.**
- 4 **Identity Theft seminar**, Frankfort Business and Professional Women, site and time TBA, Frankfort. RSVP by November 1 to Julie Hunsinger at 502/609-1003 or jhunsinger@ihlic.com.
- 8 **Kentucky Coalition for Women's Substance Abuse Services**, 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Jenny Wiley State Park, Prestonsburg. Contact Lynn Posze, Program Coordinator of the University of Kentucky Institute of Women and Substance Abuse, at 859/257-6441 for more information.
- 8-9 **Art Show & Sale and Madison County Gallery Hop**, Richmond, FREE. Show & Sale at the Richmond Area Arts Center. Call 859/624-4242 or visit www.artsinrichmond.com for more information.
- 19 **Derby City Chapter of Federally Employed Women, Inc.**, Holiday Inn Downtown, Bienville Room, 5:15 p.m., Louisville. Contact Mary Lou Andres for more information at 502/569-3884 or marylouandres@msn.com.
- 20-22 **Kentucky Women's Law Enforcement Network Annual Conference**, Hyatt Regency, Lexington. For more information please contact Jill Nehila at 859/622-2362 or jill.nehila@eku.edu.

Kentucky Women's Political Caucus Takes Steps to Re-Form at Lexington Meeting

Submitted by Nancy Rankin

The Kentucky Women's Political Caucus (KWPC), an affiliate of the National Women's Political Caucus, a multi-partisan grassroots organization committed to increasing women's participation in all levels of the political process, met in Lexington on July 13 to address issues facing Kentucky women and elect new officers.

Vice President Alayne White described the issues facing Kentucky Women and Past Bluegrass Women's Political Caucus (BWPC) President Teresa Isaac addressed strategies for women helping women win. The group plans to focus efforts on candidate endorsement and new chapter development during the coming year. "Improving the status of women in Kentucky is going to take policy changes that will only occur if women are equitably represented at the table," according to Carolyn O'Daniel.

Carolyn O'Daniel of Georgetown was elected president. Alayne White of Lexington will serve as vice president, Nancy Rankin of Louisville as secretary, and Barbara Hadley Smith of Frankfort as treasurer. Other KWPC Steering Team members are Betsy Nowland-Curry of Lexington, Virginia Woodward of Louisville, Lori Davis of Lexington, and Lindsey Campbell of Midway. Patricia Hayden, president of the BWPC, and Margaret Harris, president of the Metropolitan Women's Political Caucus (MLWPC), are also KWPC Steering Team members.

The purpose of the Kentucky Women's Political Caucus is to increase women's participation in the political process and to identify, recruit, train, and support feminist women for election and appointment to public office. While in pursuit of this goal, KWPC will strive toward equality for all women; to ensure reproductive freedom; to achieve quality dependent care; and to eradicate sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, ageism, ableism, violence, poverty, and discrimination on the basis of religion or sexual orientation.

Excerpts from *Kentucky Women's Health 2002: Data, Developments and Decisions*

Improvements in key health indicators

- Infant, child and teen mortality rates declined from 1990 to 1999.
- Racial disparity still exists in mortality rates between white and black infants, with black infant mortality nearly doubling that of white infants.
- Teen pregnancy rates dropped for both black and white adolescents.
- Breast cancer incidence rose while breast cancer mortality is slowly declining. (Higher incidence rates may be partially attributed to improved screening, while declining mortality may be due, in part, to earlier detection through screening.)
- Number of screening mammograms performed at local health departments increased 17-fold during the past 10 years.
- Rates of uninsured women dropped from 18.9 percent in 1991 to 12.8 percent in 2000.

Areas of Concern

- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among women in Kentucky, representing 41.1 percent of all female deaths in 1999.
- Kentucky women had the lowest rate of self-reported physical activity than women in all other states.
- Rising diabetes rates are consistently higher than national rates.
- In 2000, Kentucky had the second highest rate of women (including pregnant women) smoking in the nation.
- Rural women are disproportionately affected by certain diseases such as heart disease and lung and cervical cancers.
- Black women suffer from hypertension at nearly twice the rate of white women.
- Colorectal cancer rates are higher than national rates, increasing among black women and decreasing slightly among white women.
- Women suffer from depression at twice the rate of men.

To obtain a copy of *Kentucky Women's Health 2002: Data, Developments and Decisions*, contact the Office of Women's Physical and Mental Health at 502/564-9358, or download the report from their website at <http://chs.state.ky.us/womenshealth>



On May 9, 2002, over 50 girls came to the State Capitol to participate in the declaration of Kentucky Take Our Daughters to Work Day. These daughters and daughters-for-a-day spent time in many cabinets and offices of state government. Here they are pictured in the Capitol Rotunda with Governor and Mrs. Patton.

Message from the Executive Director

by Betsy Nowland-Curry, KCW Executive Director

The Kentucky Commission on Women congratulates Governor Paul E Patton who recently received the 2002 national Women Executives in State Government (WESG) Excellence in Leadership Award at their annual conference in Washington, DC. Governor Patton was nominated for this award by Secretary Crit Luallen and KCW.

The WESG Excellence in Leadership Awards are given to four individuals in different categories for their achievements and for their assistance to advance other women in the public and/or private sectors. Governor Patton was entered in the governor's category and received this award based on his commitment to eliminating barriers to advancement of women; appointing women to his administration; and achieving professional excellence in leadership. Governor Patton has worked to assist many women to achieve their professional goals.

Governor Patton has always supported KCW and as you are aware created the Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women. What you may not know is that seven of his 14 Cabinet secretaries are female and he appointed more women to judicial posts in his first three years in office than all other Kentucky governors combined. He and Mrs. Patton are dedicated to all Kentuckians having better lives and women—who represent over half of Kentucky's population—stand to benefit most from his higher education reforms, early childhood education programs, and his efforts to propel Kentucky into the New Economy.

KCW was proud to help create the nomination packet for Governor Patton due to his commitment to improving the lives of women in Kentucky. His support of programs and services to women, children, and families is unparalleled by other US governors.



Governor Patton received his Excellend in Leadership Award from Crit Luallen on June 11, 2002.

COMMISSION CONNECTION

KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON
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